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WAR WITH GERMANY?

IS THERE to be war between the United States and Germany? The relations between these two countries are very much strained, and there is a chance that the strain will increase. In times of such stress it is difficult to think and speak dispassionately. Honest men and true are profoundly stirred, but most men are thinking and speaking of the situation, for the most part, in superficial terms of detail and prejudice. Pro-this and pro-that, pan-isms, including pan-piffle, blind or befog their outlook upon the matter. How is it to be?

On and after February 18, 1915, the waters surrounding Great Britain and Ireland, including the English Channel, were declared by Germany to be a "war zone," and, because of the "misuse of neutral flags by England," neutral ships were warned of danger. Germany based her act upon England's "unjustifiable policy" of "starving the German people into submission." Our Government then officially notified Germany that it "views the possibilities with grave concern." Fine questions presented themselves. "Are the new undersea war craft subject to an international law which prevailed before submarines were thought of?" "How can submarines take captive merchant vessels before a prize court?" "What is the ethics of sinking captured vessels?" "In the light of the new methods of destruction what is to be done with neutral and enemy cargoes?" "What constitutes international good manners in attacking and sinking ships? In caring for ships' papers? In measures of retaliation and confiscation? In exporting arms? In capturing and killing generally?"

Then came the sinking of the British steamship *Lusitania*, May 7, 1915, and the loss of many American lives. Unfortunate, terrible, and unlawful; to this all happily enough agree. The American Government then said officially to Germany that it "views Germany's actions with growing concern, distress, and amazement," and added that Germany "would be held to a strict accountability for any infringement of our rights." The United States further explained that the lives of neutral citizens cannot lawfully be put in jeopardy when on unarmed merchantmen; that it is incumbent upon Germany first to visit and search vessels that she may ascertain if the vessel is really belligerent or carrying contraband. Then, in the language of "fairness," "reason," "justice," "humanity," Germany was substantially notified to do three things: first, to disavow the sinking of the *Lusitania*; second, to make reparation for it; and, third, to prevent the recurrence of any similar act. The Imperial German Government, in reply under date of July 8, sent a note to the United States which quite failed to meet any one of the three points at issue. So, July 21, the United States reiterated the principle of the freedom of the seas, of first ascertaining the character and cargo of the merchantmen before seizing and destroying, and of the rights of non-combatants. The American note went further and insisted that the Government of the United

States would continue to contend for its rights upon the seas, "from whatever quarter violated without compromise and at any cost." It closed with these significant words:

"Friendship itself prompts it (the United States Government) to say to the Imperial Government that repetition by the commanders of German naval vessels of acts in contravention of those rights must be regarded by the Government of the United States, when they affect American citizens, as deliberately unfriendly."

Now, suppose the sinking of the *Lusitania* is not disavowed, that reparation is not made, and, worst of all, that other American lives are sacrificed? In short, suppose a "deliberately unfriendly" act of Germany is committed? What then? We judge the next step would be to sever all diplomatic relations with Germany. This, however, could not be considered an act of war. We have severed diplomatic relations with other nations heretofore and without war. There remain the expedients of non-intercourse, diplomatic pressure, and ultimately the device of judicial decision too rational, we fear, to receive serious consideration at this time.

But, suppose further, that we were to declare war against Germany? Would it accomplish for us any one of the three things we are after? Does any one believe that Germany can be coerced into disavowing, making reparation, or preventing recurrence? War would simply compound the felony a thousand-fold and get us nowhere the while. Our Government is not to be swept from its feet by the wild clamor of any unthinking mob. 'America wishes no war with Germany. There will be no war between the United States and Germany.

OUR PROGRAM

THE accredited peace movement advocates neither wild nor impossible schemes. Its main assumption is and always has been simply that war as a means of settling international disputes represents a barbaric age; that it is an insane and intolerable nuisance. It assumes that war must therefore be curtailed and outlawed that it may take its proper place along with piracy, the duel, trial by torture, and the like. Our program has consistently maintained that war will be abolished only by supplanting it by a better and more sensible method; in short, that there must be a substitute for it. It has maintained and still continues to maintain that this substitute must take the form of an International Legislature and an International Judiciary.

It is true that the pacifists aim to examine and interpret the facts of international relations with all the wisdom and kindness that they can bring to the task. They aim to belittle across the world the wild spirit of international anarchy; but the chief aim is, and always has been, to bring the two main principles into the realm of convictions with men and women. They would that